Abstract of the Disclosure

A method and system for generating and printing an indicium, such as a postal indicium, on an object such as a mail piece. Other printed material, such as an address block, on the object is scanned, and the scanned image is processed to abstract characterizing information descriptive of the other printed material. Alternatively, the image to be processed can be obtained by filtering the original image wit a print/scan filter which simulates printing and scanning processes. The characterizing information can be text-based or image-based. Image-based characterizing information can be measurements of word lengths, counts of outliers in images of characters, or descriptions of the shape of the other printed material. The characterizing information is combined with other information, such as postal information and the combined information is then cryptographically authenticated with a digital signature or the like. An indicium representative of the authenticated information is then printed on the object. The object's relationship to the indicium can be verified by regenerating the characterizing information from the other printed material and comparing the regenerated characterizing information with characterizing information recovered from the indicium. Thus, copies of the indicium cannot easily be used, without detection, on other objects which do not include the other printed material